



EDIC BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, June 9, 2020

Zoom Meeting

- Call to Order of the Board. Meeting began at 4:37pm.
- Roll Call Taken
- In attendance: B. Bramhall (Acting Chair), C. Gustin, T. Balf, T. Hedges, T. Wood, M. DiLascio, J. Oppenheim, and R. Pino (Treasurer). Also, in attendance, S. DiStefano, Gloucester's Director of Economic Development, and J. Cunningham, Attorney for the EDIC.
- Minutes were approved from the March 10th, 2020 meeting were approved with one minor correction. All were in favor.
- **Gloucester Reopening Task Force Update**: All the industrial parks are up and running. Some businesses did scale back. T. Hedges did reach out to all park tenants and owner's and all were fine and did not need any assistance. The City has partnered with an HR consultant company along with the Gloucester Public Health Nurse to help with assisting companies with reopening. A recorded webinar has gone out to businesses. Most companies in the park were deemed essential businesses. Many of these companies are B2B and by appointment only so they were not open to the general public. Sal DiStefano continues to work with park tenants and owners and appreciated the EDIC's involvement. The HR video is available to any business and will be available next week for the public to view. Some of the smaller businesses have a good handle on what is going but some businesses have questions about moving forward and reopening.
- **Cometeer**- A coffee manufacturer is looking into starting their operation at 21 Great Republic Drive. The company is already operating out of a different location and have raised 35 million dollars to do an expansion. Cometeer cryogenically freezes coffee beans in the manufacturing process. S. DiStefano has been working with this company since February and they plan on moving forward with tif incentives. The City will give a discount on future incremental tax incentives for future growth for the company. Cometeer was going before the City Council this evening and asking for the tif incentives. Cometeer will be a great addition to the park during a difficult time. The coffee pods that they create are aluminum and recyclable. These pods can be currently ordered online for home deliveries. S. DiStefano has connected the company with Mass Hire to be able to fill any positions. Cometeer currently operates out of a Bedford, Mass location. The plan will eventually consist of moving the Bedford location into the new Gloucester facility. There are currently seven employees working in Bedford that may be relocated to the Gloucester.

The Grossman Companies contacted the EDIC in regards to Cometeer's plan which is to quickly set up a small pilot production area involving adding 25-30 lineal feet of new insulated partitions. This pilot will be starting out small and any findings from the pilot will guide the company to create the overall plant layout for the future. It will be important to quickly build momentum and job creation.

- **Signage for Blackburn Industrial Park-** If any new signage decisions are to be made, DiStefano would like Cometeer to be part of the decision-making process. T. Wood provided the Board with an update on signage. The EDIC is still waiting for pricing and once received then can move forward on the project. The goal for new signage would be to create a high-end support structure that you could easily be able to change out signs over time. Seaside Graphics will be providing a quote with a good, better, best approach with guidelines for design implementation and installation.
- **The Last Mile-** At the March meeting, CATA provided an update on the Last Mile Grant. CATA has since selected a vendor but COVID-19 pandemic has slowed down the process. A survey was conducted and the results showed that 67% of workers are uncomfortable returning back to public transit. CATA is currently working through where the state is and the best timing to restart the process. The Last Mile is currently in a pause mode and is presently working to get the technology side of the project moving and picking vendors to partner with on the project.

Large employer sponsors did a recent survey with the industrial parks on public transportation. Lahey Health is assisting with putting the data together. Applied Materials currently has 70% of its workforce working off-site at least until October. Folks are likely to use public transportation but there is not a lot of demand for it presently. Gorton's has 100% of its workforce working remotely. However, manufacturing is still up and running. Many workers that use the commuter rail have requested returning to work in the last wave of state openings. The same response was received across the board from many park tenants and owners. Addison Gilbert's front line workers are not currently taking public transportation. The feedback from Applied Materials is that people are now driving in because there is no traffic. Once traffic picks up workers will most likely resort back to taking public transportation.

- **National Grid-** J. Oppenheim provided the Board with an overview. National Grid is currently seeking a location where crews can lodge locally during a crisis or during storm outages. They are currently looking for a location somewhere in Blackburn Industrial Park to create a staging area. Presently, due to COVID-19 this is the only plan that is moving forward. The other three projects have to do with energy efficiency and all have come to a stop due to COVID. Presently, National Grid is doing virtual audits. There is no work being done right now. Work could possible resume as soon as late June. National Grid will have to sort out protective equipment for workers and what the customer reaction will be. Do folks want workers coming into their homes just yet? Oppenheim brought up that National Grid does have a program for 501 C3 organizations. The EDIC needs a way to approach these 501 C3 organizations. Any account representative work with industrial park tenants and owners has since been temporarily delayed.

- **EDIC's Yearly Audit**- The EDIC's 2019 yearly audit went smoothly. R. Pino will have copies of the final report to share with Board members at the next meeting.
- **Blue Economy**- T. Balf provided the Board with a recap of the current standings of the Blue Economy Work Group. The data analyst report has been completed for all of the various sectors of the Blue Economy. The group was very pleased with the final report and was going to host an April meeting for the public that was eventually canceled. The group has been in a holding pattern since then and things have slowed down. The Blue Economy Work Group has held a number of focus groups and have had targeted groups in certain sectors. The next focus group will focus on climate resilience community and all the work that goes along with rising tides and the ocean effect.
- **The Harbor Plan**- T. Balf provided an update to the Board that he has not heard anything about the Harbor Plan. The City has been distracted with the COVID-19 pandemic and the current situation. The plan is to still put together an advisory panel.
- **EDIC Chair Position**- The EDIC Chair position needs to be addressed and filled. We will see what the current administration will do and who they will appoint. B. Bramhall will continue in the position of eminent chair.
- The next EDIC meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, July 14th at 4:30pm.
- Motion to adjourn. All were in favor.
- Meeting adjourned at 6:10pm.